Lesson Title: Let’s “Quick-write”

Date/Duration: 1st March, 2010/100 minutes (two 50 minute periods)

Lesson Overview: Students will discuss writing and brainstorming strategies after which they will engage in quick-writes as a method of brainstorming ideas for writing. The “I am paragraph” will also be introduced to the students. Students will be introduced to the main text, the Pale Horseman that will be used in the unit and will learn to analyze historical figures in fiction.

Lesson Rationale: This unit will teach students to write short stories using a personal experience as the basis for the story. A major step to writing anything is deciding what to write about. This lesson teaches the first three stages of the writing process, the beginning, visualizing and gathering, as discussed by Burke. In the beginning stage, writers decide what form the writing is going to take. In this lesson students are taught the “I am paragraph” as one form. They are also encouraged to use other preferred forms; hence, they are involved in the beginning stage of the writing process. In the visualizing stage, students are engaged in strategies which help them to see the subject they want to write about. One such method mention in chapter 9 of *The English Teacher’s Companion* is quick- writes. In this lesson students practice quick-writes as a method of generating writing ideas.

Burke says that writers need to visualize what a writing piece will look like. They need to see books and how other writers solve the problems they faced. In this lesson, students also analyze how a writer incorporates a historical figure into a fictional novel. This will give students an idea of how to incorporate their personal experiences into the form of fiction. This will be necessary for the final project which is a short story based on a personal experience.

In the gathering stage, Burke states that writers collect ideas and evidence to help give shape to and support for their writing. In this lesson and as an ongoing project students will conduct interviews and read a novel as a form of gathering information their word project which will also assist in gathering ideas for their writing.

Burke refers to the journal as the petri dish of the mind; a place where students can continuously generate ideas, some of which they may choose to develop into stronger pieces. This lesson introduces the writing journal component of this unit linking the lesson to one of the in-process texts, the writing journal.

Lesson Objectives:

Students will be able to:

* generate writing ideas through the use of quick-writes
* write an I am paragraph
* compare factual and fictional information

Objectives for ESOL students

Students will be able to generate writing ideas

*Pre-production*: The students will be given a word accompanied by a picture that relates to the novel. They will draw pictures of their writing ideas along with a simple sentence in their language.

*Early Production*: The students will be given a word accompanied by a picture that relates to the novel. They will draw pictures of their writing ideas along with one word in English that relates to their picture.

*Speech Emergence*: The students will be given a word accompanied by a picture that relates to the novel. They will write an “I am paragraph” about their word in the form of a cloze activity.

*Intermediate Fluency*: The students will be given a word accompanied by a picture that relates to the novel. They will write an “I am paragraph” about their word.

Sunshine State Standards:

LA.910.3.1.1: The student will pre-write by generating ideas from multiple sources (e.g., brainstorming, notes, journals, discussion, research materials or other reliable sources) based upon teacher-directed topics and personal interests.

LA.910.2.2.3: The student will organize information to show understanding or relationships among facts, ideas, and events (e.g., representing key points within text through charting, mapping, paraphrasing, summarizing, comparing, contrasting, or outlining).

Instructional Resources and Lesson Materials Needed:

* Example of an I am paragraph
* The Pale Horseman by Bernard Cornwell
* Bowl and strips of paper
* Handout about Uhtred of Bebbanburg/Bamburgh
* Example of character classification table

Additional Materials for ESOL:

* Words accompanied with pictures for ESOL students
* “I am paragraph” in the form of a cloze activity
* pictures to be used for I am paragraph/ access to the internet or clip art program

Lesson Sequence (include approximate times for each segment):

**Introduction/Lead-in/ Focus:**

5 minutes

* Have the following instructions already written on the board for when the students come in: Please have a seat and think of a word you like. Write that word onto a piece of paper. While students are thinking of their words choose one of your own.
* After all students have been seated and have had approximately five minutes to think about their word move on to the next activity. Let students know that the words will be used in a later activity.
* Now lead the students into a discussion about creative writing.
  + What forms of creative writing have you engaged in?
  + What methods have teachers used when teaching writing?
  + What methods have you used before to generate topics/ideas for writing?
  + Which were your favorite methods? Why?
* Take note of the different methods of generating ideas/topics for writing on the board.

**Explicit Instruction**:

Day 1

15 minutes

* Now we’re going to use a quick write as one way of generating ideas to write about. The words that you have written on your piece of paper are going to be your topics.
* Pass out the examples of an "I am paragraph". This is one way of writing about the words you have chosen but you are free to write in any other way you choose. Who would like to read the paragraph?
* Now explain the construction of an "I am paragraph".

What is the first sentence? (I am **isolated**.) Isolated is the word this person chose to write the “I am paragraph” on. The word that you have chosen should be in the place of isolated.

What is the second sentence? (I do not want to conform to the idealist viewpoints of my surrounding peers.)

Does this sentence relate to the word isolated? How does this sentence reinforce the idea of isolation? Conform conveys the idea of becoming part of while not conforming conveys the idea of standing apart or separate, maybe isolated.

How does the third sentence convey the idea of isolation?

This is how you have to construct your sentences when using the "I am paragraph". Every sentence must relate back to the idea of the first sentence.

15 minutes

* Now do an example with the class. Using the word that you chose at the beginning of the class create an "I am paragraph" as a class.
* Write the first sentence on the board. I am \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Continue to construct the paragraph together. Allow as many students to contribute to the paragraph. The suggested number of sentences for the paragraph should be ten. When students’ sentences do not relate to the topic redirect them by asking the previous questions used for the “I am isolated” paragraph (Does this sentence relate to the word \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_? How does this sentence reinforce the idea of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_?).

15 minutes

* Reinforce the fact that there are many ways to generate ideas for writing and students may choose to use any method they are comfortable with.
* Students will now create an I am paragraph of their own using their chosen word or may choose to write in some other form. Students have the rest of the period to work on their paragraph. Assign the paragraph to be completed as homework and turned into the next class.

Day 2

16 minutes

* Have a bowl with strips of paper in it prepared for the beginning of the class. A word should be written on each strip of paper that relates to the text (The Pale Horseman: Christianity, penance, war, war lords, pagans, wergild, Vikings, Anglo-Saxon etc.)
* Distribute the strips of paper at the beginning of the class by having students draw a strip from the bowl.
* Reiterate what was done last class or ask the students to recall the last class. Link the activity of last class to today’s class.
  + Methods of generating ideas for writing were discussed.
  + Starting from today students will keep a writing journal that they will write in at the beginning of each class – a mining ground for writing ideas for the rest of the unit.
  + Today you have already been given a writing prompt. Those are the pieces of paper in you drew from the bowl. Some days students will be free to write on any chosen topics.
* Now have the students read the words on their strips of paper aloud. Explain to them that these are words related to the main text, The Pale Horseman.
* Introduce and give a briefing of the main text. The Pale Horseman is a historical fiction about the attack of the Vikings on the old, English kingdom of Wessex and the ensuing battle between the Vikings and Alfred’s army. The novel presents history through story form. We will study the way history can be represented in fiction. This knowledge will be necessary for the final project which is a short story based on your personal experiences.
* Now I want you to write on the words you have been given. It could be anything you know about it or anything it makes you think of. If you absolutely do not know what it is, you may look up the word or invent a situation to use the word in. You have10 minutes try to write at least 5 sentences. Students may continue to work on this as homework.

5 minutes

* These words that you have chosen are your words to define. You will develop a definition through interviews, through its use in the novel and your personal understanding of the word. You will then present your definition of the word in a creative form.
* Now have the students begin their project by interviewing one fellow classmate. Distribute the handouts with the guidelines and rubrics for the project. Let the students know that they need to think of how they would like to present their word’s definition and be ready to let you know by the next class (Students must choose a form by next class to have teacher approval of their projects but they are free to change the form of their presentations later on with teacher approval).

10 minutes

* Ask students what they know of Alfred, the Great/the Vikings/the outcome of the war between the kingdom of Wessex and the Vikings. Taking a poll to see how many people know or have heard of these things might be a good starting point.
* Begin by reading the first chapter. Have the students note the characters listed in the novel (Students may need prompting/reminders the first few times and for the important characters).

10 minutes

* After reading pages 1 and 2 stop and investigate the character of Uhtred. Distribute the handouts about Uhtred.
* Have students work in pairs. Let them go over the first two pages that have just been read and the handout to compare the descriptions of Uhtred from the novel and the handout. Distribute the example of the character classification table or display it to the students in some other way. Students should note all the information that are factual about Uhtred and the ones that have been embellished. They should also note what was done to embellish the character of Uhtred (description: adjectives, exaggerations etc.)

9 minutes

* Discuss the student’s findings. What was factual and what was fictional? What was used in the description of Uhtred? Categorize the descriptions to help students see ways they may embellish their character(s) for their final project, the short story and end the class on that note.
* Have students finish reading chapter 1 for homework and do a similar exercise for the following characters: Alfred, King of the West Saxons; Ubba Lothbrokson; Odda, the Younger; Guthrum, Ælswith/Ealhswith and Beocca. Assign each student three characters.

Assessment and Assessment Criteria:

The “I am paragraphs” (or other chosen form of writing), their chosen words and the characters classification tables will be collected from students to assess their understanding of the lesson. A complete writing that follows the appropriate format (where applicable e.g. poem, “I am paragraph” etc.) and demonstrates a link of ideas between the chosen word and the quick-write will be considered satisfactory.

Adaptations for different levels of ESOL students

*Pre-production and Early Production*: Students’ drawings will be collected along with the words they were given to assess their understanding of generating writing ideas. Students’ work should demonstrate a link between the words and the illustrations.

*Speech Emergence*: Students cloze activity and their given word will be collected to assess their understanding. Students’ work should demonstrate a link between the given word and their cloze activity; there should be a suitable flow of ideas between the given word and the cloze activity.

*Intermediate Fluency*: Students “I am paragraph” and their given word will be collected to assess their understanding. Students’ work should demonstrate knowledge of the “I am paragraph” format and a suitable flow of ideas between the given word and the paragraph.

Lesson Plan Extensions and Modification Ideas

In order to shorten the lesson you may omit the discussion of other methods of and focus on the use of quick-writes as a form of brainstorming. You may also leave the choice of writing up to the students instead of focusing on the I am paragraph which will eliminate the need to teach the format of an “I am paragraph”

The novel can then be introduced with the omission of the other quick-write.

ESOL Modification

The lesson can be focused only on the “I am paragraph” as a method of brainstorming.

*Pre-production and Early Production:* First demonstrate the “I am paragraph” with the use of pictures to explain the format. Then construct an “I am paragraph” as a class using pictures/drawings to demonstrate ideas instead of words. The result would be a series of pictures demonstrating the idea of an “I am paragraph”. Finally have the students construct their own “I am paragraph” following the same format. Students may be provided with a collection of pictures to create their picture paragraph. It is easier to have students draw to demonstrate their ideas or search for the pictures they need online or in a clip art program. Students at the stage of early production may annotate their picture paragraph using one or two words or short phrases.

*Speech Emergence*: First demonstrate the “I am paragraph” with the use of pictures to explain the format. Then construct an “I am paragraph” as a class using pictures/drawings along with the sentences to demonstrate idea of the paragraph. Finally have the students construct their own “I am paragraph” in the form of a cloze activity. Students may be provided with a collection of pictures to help illustrate their paragraph. It is easier to have students draw to demonstrate their ideas or search for the pictures they need online or in a clip art program.

*Intermediate Fluency*: First demonstrate the “I am paragraph” with the use of pictures to explain the format. Then construct an “I am paragraph” as a class using pictures/drawings along with the sentences to demonstrate idea of the paragraph. Finally have the students construct their own “I am paragraph”. Students may choose to illustrate their paragraph or not.

Lesson Plan forms/handouts

Example of an “I am paragraph

“I am **isolated**. I do not want to conform to the idealist viewpoints of my surrounding peers. I sit alone, strongly opinionated. People I sit with at school, joke around with immature innuendos while I try to think of ways to help the less fortunate. I plan what I want to do while the talk of boys lingers around. I sit by myself, in my room. I rather stay home with my family than with multitudes of friends. Wherever I am, I stay reserved, calm, quiet and shy. I am not loud and excited about everything. I am, for the most part, fine with this withdrawn way of being.”

Taken and modified from: http://answers.yahoo.com/question/index?qid=20081214180529AAXDQK0

Handout about Uhtred of Bebbanburg/Bamburgh

Uhtred of Bamburgh

* was the [ealdorman of all Northumbria](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Earl_of_Northumbria) from 1006 to 1016
* was assassinated in 1016
* was the son of [Waltheof I](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Waltheof_of_Bernicia), [ealdorman](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ealdorman) of [Bamburgh](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bamburgh), whose ancient family had ruled from the castle of Bamburgh on the Northumbrian coast
* married Aldhun's daughter, Ecgfrida
* he received several estates that had belonged to the church from his marriage
* Danes were raiding southern England and Uhtred called together an army from Bernicia and Yorkshire and led it against the Scots which was successful

Character classification table

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Factual information | Fictional information |
| E.g. from Bebbanburg | E.g. arrogant, stupid, headstrong (use of adjectives) |
|  |  |
|  |  |

Name of character: Uhtred